



# **JAG**

Joint Action Group for  
Environmental Clean-Up of the  
Muggah Creek Watershed

## **Site Security Working Group**

*Coming Together is a Beginning  
Keeping Together is Progress  
Working Together is Success*

## **Our mission:**

The Site Security Working Group will give the highest priority to the health and safety of site workers and residents in our community while working in an open, and all- inclusive, community- driven process which can provide for the clean- up of Muggah Creek Watershed in an environmentally-safe and cost-efficient manner.

# **Role of Site Security**

The role of Site Security Working Group is to promote the health and safety of site workers and community residents and to ensure the security of the site.

## **Mandate & Responsibilities**

The general mandate of Site Security is to promote the health and safety of site workers and community residents as well as the security of the site.

Our working group's primary geographical areas of concern include: the Coke Ovens site, the Tar Ponds and impacts resulting from the Marsh Dump.

## **The Coke Ovens Site = Danger**

The Coke Ovens site is very dangerous due to the presence of partially demolished buildings; deep water filled holes, miles of underground trenches and tunnels, various hazardous chemicals, and several brooks crossing the site. Even the most cautious of pedestrians could easily lose their footing and be seriously hurt.

Site Security has been working to educate the public on these dangers, which will, hopefully, discourage people from crossing the Coke Ovens site. This will help prevent accidents and allow scientific site sampling to take place as demolition work continues.

The clean-up of the contaminated water, soil and material beneath the surface will then be possible, with minimized risk to the health and safety of employees and of the residents in the area.

## **The Tar Ponds Site**

The Sydney Tar Ponds were once a panorama of Great Blue herons, marsh grass, and fishing boats. Today, after years of industrial activity, a dark pool of oily black mud fills the area many local elders remember as Muggah Creek.

If left undisturbed, there is actually little evidence of air pollution from the chemicals in the Tar Ponds; however, some of the smell and short-term risks are from the raw sewage that pours into the Tar Ponds on a daily basis. The chemicals in the Tar Ponds such as PAHs\* and PCBs\*\* may produce a skin rash in the short term, but could potentially cause disease later on. (\*polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, \*\*polychlorinated biphenyl's).

The Tar Ponds are in the industrial area of Sydney and some areas are relatively inaccessible. Warning signs have



been put up and consideration will be given to additional fencing as required.

Steps are being taken to divert sewage from flowing in to the Tar Ponds before the actual clean-up begins.

## Marsh Dump

The Marsh Dump was originally used for slag and other Sysco waste material. This area is currently being used for municipal garbage and ash from the CBRM garbage incinerator.

In addition to the trucks and heavy equipment busily moving around, the Marsh Dump also poses other physical hazards, including garbage and uneven footing, just to name a few.

Considering all of the health and safety risks in this area, if you don't have to be there on business, it's not a good place to be!

## Phase I Demolition at Coke Ovens Site

### *Work In Progress*

1. Coal and Coke Piles
2. Sulphur Building and Contents
3. Steam Line
4. Coal Transfer Building
5. Water Standpipe and Building
6. Timber Rail Trestles
7. Coal Unloading and Storage Runway
8. Other Physical Hazards
9. Security Patrols

## Phase II Demolition At Coke Ovens Site

### *Next Steps*

1. Domtar Tank
2. Cooling Tower Grids
3. Stacks
4. By-Products Building
5. Coal Underway
6. Brick
7. Coke Batteries
8. Wooden Loading Ramp
9. Sysco Cooling Pond
10. Tar Lagoon Removal
11. Additional Fencing
12. Safety Awareness Video
13. Benzol Tank Farm Area
14. Security Patrols



# Accomplishments to Date

- Site Security was one of the first working groups to recommend securing the site. The members recognized the need to limit the public's contact with the physical dangers and any contaminants that may be within its boundaries.
- Fencing issues for security of the site is a top priority. Fencing has been installed around the perimeter of the Coke Ovens site and the Tar Ponds.
- 24-hour security is in place for the Coke Ovens site.
- Site Security and the Public Education and Participation Working Group have produced an educational video outlining the hazards on the sites.
- Site Security initiated the action to have a first response team for any emergency/disaster incident that may occur on site. An Emergency Response Vehicle has been purchased and will complement the efforts being established in the overall Emergency response Plan. The plan will include Hazardous Material training for our local firefighters.





# What is JAG?

Created in the fall of 1996, the Joint Action Group (JAG) is an innovative community-driven process: a group of individuals working together with the goal of remediating the Muggah Creek Watershed, one of Canada's most toxic sites. Beyond the original perceived need to find a solution to the Sydney Tar Ponds, JAG's mandate is much broader. It also includes the former Coke Ovens sites and the impacts of the MAID - all part of the Muggah Creek Watershed area.

JAG is comprised of local residents, business people and representatives of the three levels of government, First Nation's representatives, and youth. JAG's infrastructure is made up of several working groups 'and' standing subcommittees: Health Studies, Site Security, Public Education and Participation (PEP), Environmental Data Gathering and Research (EDGAR), Remedial Options, Governance, and, the Ethics, Planning, Financial and Human Resources subcommittees. JAG is supported by a Secretariat, managed by a Steering Committee and reports overall to a Roundtable, which is made up of some 50 members representing the community.

JAG strives to work together as one community, one "voice", merging the individual interests of all those involved for the greater good of the community.

*For more information on the JAG or the Muggah Creek Watershed Clean-Up:*

JAG Secretariat  
320 Esplanade  
Sydney, NS B1P 7B9  
(902) 563-5584 or visit [www.muggah.org](http://www.muggah.org)